

Questions for U.S. Representative Candidates:

1. What is your position regarding drilling off the coast of Georgia?

Earl (Buddy) Carter (Incumbent):

I have always said I support an all-of-the-above energy approach, and that includes exploring offshore energy development. However, moving forward, any energy exploration must be done in a way that does not harm our beautiful coastline. I am committed to working to ensure a positive relationship between increasing our energy independence and protecting our beautiful coasts, marine life, and industries.

Right now, I believe citizens of the First District need more information and to have their voices heard about this issue. That's why I requested that the Department of Interior hold a coastal meeting in the district to hear from residents and to further explain their plan. The current draft proposed plan includes Georgia, but there are multiple steps and a lot of time before that becomes a reality. If our requests aren't met or it turns out that the plan isn't beneficial to the people and our communities, then I'm not afraid to walk away.

Lisa Ring:

At a time when we should be transitioning to 100% clean, safe, renewable and sustainable energy, we should not even consider opening our beautiful Georgia coast to exploratory oil drilling. Drilling would be costly, would industrialize our coast, yield scant oil reserves that, if found, would be exported, endanger our environment, its inhabitants, and our tourism, eco-tourism, fishing and shrimping industries, would compromise our national security, and would not contribute to our local economy. This is an issue upon which most of the residents Coastal Georgia agree, we should not drill off our shores.

2. What do you see as the top three issues facing Glynn County today?

Carter:

First, the vitality of the Port of Brunswick is very important, not only to Glynn County, but to the entire Southeast. Continuing to work towards beneficial trade agreements with other nations is important to the port which gives so many jobs to citizens in and around Brunswick. Additionally, I will continue fighting for critical maintenance and operation funding from the federal government.

Second, workforce development is important to Glynn County and the rest of Coastal Georgia. With the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, we put more money in the pockets of American people. This legislation, which is the largest reform to our tax code in more than 30 years, not only allows hardworking Georgians to keep more of their paychecks, it also creates tax laws that help businesses grow and hire more people. In Georgia, we are estimated to gain 10,000 new jobs.

This is combined with an economy that is already doing very well. I will continue to support ways to develop our workforce, which includes supporting Coastal Pines Technical College, the Brunswick Jobs Corps, FLETC, and more.

Finally, the Brunswick Sewer Project is very important to the economy of the city as well as the health and safety of the residents. This is mainly a local issue, but we recognize the importance of this project to the local area.

I have been working with the State of Georgia as well as officials in Brunswick and we have been working to compile federal sources of funding to support the project.

Ring:

I believe that Glynn County's 20% poverty rate and 30% child poverty rate is the most pressing issue, and this is due to a lack of jobs paying a living wage and an economically unbalanced system. Next is a lack of infrastructure investment which has led to an unstable water and sewage system and a lack of transportation for residents. Third, would be the need to plan to meet the needs of all Glynn County residents fairly to reduce disparities in education and governance based on geographic location.

3. What can you do in your role to ensure that Glynn County is taking full advantage of whatever tax incentives and/or grants might be available to the County?

Carter:

My office is in constant contact with the federal agencies to get the most up to date grants, deadlines, and information to relay to the district.

Further, I am available at any point to write a letter of support for grants that Glynn County may apply for. I have done this numerous times in the past, and I will continue to do so in the future.

Ring:

Other than voting to provide such funds, a congressional representative should make the effort to inform the public of grants and incentives available to them and even provide assistance with applications whenever possible.

4. What can the federal government do to address/solve the infrastructure issues in Glynn County?

Carter:

A top priority of mine in Congress is to provide federal infrastructure funding for local projects.

I am currently working with other members of Congress and the Trump Administration to craft infrastructure legislation that will benefit the First District of Georgia. Additionally, I recently supported legislation that includes billions of dollars to fund infrastructure.

I also believe it's important that the federal government works with state and local sponsors to secure grants for our communities. One example is Community Development Block Grants which applies to a range of different issues, including wastewater and drinking water projects.

I am also working to ensure the Port of Brunswick gets maintenance funding to maintain proper depth. I worked to ensure this funding was included in the recent federal spending bill passed by Congress.

I will also continue to work with state and local transportation officials to ensure there aren't regulatory or timing snags that could interfere with local projects. Communication and coordination will need to go hand-in-hand with federal funding support dollars and I'm working to ensure major projects in Glynn County, such as the Brunswick-Golden Isles Airport, can not only serve the folks here but can grow and support the growth of the community.

Ring:

The most important action the federal government can take to help resolve infrastructure issues is to financially support county infrastructure priorities and county transportation in any new infrastructure legislation presented by Congress. Authorization should include preservation of tax-exempt status of municipal bonds, dedicated funding for locally owned infrastructure, streamlining of federal permit process, policies that allow for innovative financing, and commitment to the solvency of the federal Highway Trust Fund.